

# Town of Tiverton



## Economic Development Commission

343 Highland Road, Tiverton Rhode Island 02878

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### MEETING MINUTES

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ORGANIZATION: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

DATE AND TIME: MAY 9, 2013 @ 6:00PM

LOCATION: TIVERTON COMMUNITY CENTER  
346 JUDSON STREET  
TIVERTON, RI 02878

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Chairman Scott Humphrey called the regular meeting of the Tiverton Economic Development Commission to order at 6:00 P.M. Other members present were: Vice Chairman Thomas Humphrey, Leonard Schmidt and Susan Gill. Jonathan Cottrell was absent.

#### **Item # 1      Approval of minutes meeting of April 2013**

Mr. Schmidt made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. Gill seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Gill, Mr. S. Humphrey, Mr. T. Humphrey and Mr. Schmidt voted in favor of the motion.

Item #5 was taken out of order.

#### **Item # 2      Finalize the talking points and conceptual illustration of the mailer to be added to the property tax invoices.**

Ms. Gill stated that she had received 2 estimates for the printing of the mailer, which would be sent out with all of the residential and tangible tax bills. She noted that the bills would be mailed in June, but the mailer must be ready by mid-May. She estimated that 1,500 mailers would be left over, and could be placed at area businesses or points of interest. Discussion ensued regarding printing prices and the mailer's layout. Mr. S. Humphrey suggested that Paul's Press should be contacted in order to give them an opportunity to match the other prices. The EDC members agreed that a local business should be given the business if they could be competitive. The EDC members also expressed a preference for the horizontal layout of the mailer.

Once the final draft of the mailer is approved by the EDC, approval of the Town Administrator and Tax Assessor will be sought. Ms. Gill agreed to continue working on the project. Mr. Schmidt noted that website hits should be tracked both before and after the mailer, in order to measure effectiveness.

**Item #3            Discuss the Four Corners Merchant Group's request to add their promotional video onto the TEDC's website.**

Mr. S. Humphrey stated that he had spoken with Town Solicitor Andrew Teitz, who had approved the request to allow the Four Corners Merchant group's video on the EDC website. Mr. Teitz had said that it would be OK as long as there is equal treatment for all. Mr. S. Humphrey suggested that a workshop should be scheduled in order to establish criteria and a formal policy for allowing video's on the site. The EDC members agreed.

**Item #4            Town meetings update:**

**Harbor Commission / Susan Gill:** Ms. Gill gave a synopsis of the Harbor Commission meeting that she attended, noting that the Town is currently without a Harbor Master. A brief discussion ensued regarding the issue of a pump out boat.

**Recreation Commission / Susan Gill:** Ms. Gill summarized the Recreation Commission meeting, noting that they had a lot going on with baseball / softball, soccer and the various parks and recreation areas and beaches. She noted that there were quite a few projects that needed to be done, but no funding to do so.

**Planning Board & Town Council / Len Schmidt:** Mr. Schmidt stated that he had attended a joint Planning Board / Town Council meeting on April 29 that was held to discuss the proposed Tiverton Crossings mixed-use development. He noted that a site walk would be scheduled and suggested that some of the EDC members might want to attend. The scheduling would be addressed at the next Town Council meeting.

**Wastewater Management / Jon Cottrell:** Mr. Cottrell was absent, and would update the EDC at the next meeting.

**Zoning Board / Thomas Humphrey:** Mr. T. Humphrey stated that there was no meeting held this month.

**Four Corners Merchant Group / Scott Humphrey & Susan Gill:** Mr. S. Humphrey recapped the meeting, noting that there was discussion regarding Chamber of Commerce membership and the upcoming spring "Nestival".

**Item #5            Regional Economic Development formation**

This item was taken out of order (before Item #2).

Jody Sullivan, Executive Director of the Newport County Chamber of Commerce was present on behalf of this item. Ms. Sullivan stated that a grant had been received from the Rhode Island Foundation in order to allow the NCDC (a non-profit subsidiary of the Newport County Chamber of Commerce) to develop a strategic plan for the formation of a regional economic development group or agency. She stated that the stakeholders (representatives of the participating communities and business groups) had met a few times to discuss regional opportunities. Participating communities include Jamestown, Newport, Middletown, Portsmouth, Bristol and Tiverton. Ms. Sullivan stated that she would also like to involve Warren in order to establish a boat building industry presence. There is an opportunity for matching funds from the vanBeuren Foundation (\$2 from vanBeuren for every \$1 pledged by the participants). Newport and Middletown have pledged funding and an application has been submitted to van Beuren. A budget of \$110,000 has been proposed in order to hire a consultant for one year.

This consultant would create the legal structure for the regional entity, a website (based on best practices) and a job specification for a permanent staff person.

Mr. S. Humphrey noted that Tiverton has not committed any funds, but has committed to participate. He asked what amount of money was being requested from the communities. Ms. Sullivan replied that no specific dollar amount had been requested, and that activities will focus on the communities that commit funds. Mr. Schmidt asked who the consultant and staff would report to. Ms. Sullivan replied that the project would operate out of the Newport Chamber's office, and anyone hired would report to the Board of the regional group once it is formed. Mr. Schmidt asked what type of data would be collected and available on the website. Ms. Sullivan replied that there would be information regarding available commercial / industrial space, zoning information, type of space available and area of growth. She anticipated that the staff person hired would be an expert in matching up the needs of business people with the community that best suited those needs.

Discussion ensued regarding budgeting and a possible financial contribution from the Tiverton EDC. Mr. S. Humphrey stated that he would speak with Mr. Goncalo regarding transferring some uncommitted funds to an account to pledge to the project.

**Item #6            Independence Day or summer celebration activities to engage business community in Tiverton – Scott Humphrey**

Mr. Humphrey noted that the Town used to hold an Independence Day fireworks display. He suggested that the Tiverton and Portsmouth business communities could raise funds for a joint display, to be set off from a barge in the river. He opined that this would be a great amenity for the townspeople, and a great way to engage the business community. Town Councilor William Gerlach noted that the group "Tiverton First" was organizing a summer celebration, including a parade and other events. He added that this would be on the next Town Council agenda. Mr. S. Humphrey stated that he would contact the group to find out if fireworks were part of the plans.

**Item #7            Business Park Update – Len Schmidt**  
**Item #8            Souza Road Update – Len Schmidt**

Discussion of these two items was combined. Mr. Schmidt noted that the potential Souza Road developer, Carpiionato Group, had also put forth an offer on the Industrial / Business Park. The need to develop the Industrial Park in accordance with the highest and best use was briefly discussed. Mr. Schmidt noted that the long term benefits, such as employment and tax revenues, must be considered in addition to the selling price.

**Item #9            Newport County Chamber of Commerce offers to host a gathering of Four Corners Merchant Group – Scott Humphrey**

Mr. Humphrey noted that the Newport County Chamber would be hosting a gathering for the Four Corners Merchant Group. The NCCC had also indicated that it would be willing to host gatherings for other Tiverton business groups.

**Item #8            New Business and Economic Development Items and Updates of Interest – All**

**A. Public Forum for Businesses** Mr. Gerlach stated that he and Town Councilor Brett Pelletier were working to schedule a public forum in order to engage the local business community to hear first-hand feedback and create a bridge of communication. Mr. Gerlach stated that the Town Council was supportive of the concept and that he

would like to work with the EDC to get this accomplished. Mr. S. Humphrey suggested that the Fall might be the best time of year for the business community. Ms. Gill and Mr. T. Humphrey agreed to work with Mr. Gerlach and Mr. Pelletier. Mr. S. Humphrey suggested that Ms. Sullivan should also be involved.

**B. Rack Cards** Ms. Gill asked the EDC members if they would like to proceed with the printing of a rack card for display at the Newport Visitors Center (or anywhere else). She estimated that the cost of printing would be approximately \$800. Mr. Schmidt suggested that advertising should be discussed at a future meeting, in order to ensure that the website is being used to its fullest and that moneys are being spent wisely. Ms. Gill noted that ideally the rack cards would be in place by Memorial Day.

**Item #9          Next Meeting Schedule, Agenda and Adjournment**

The next meeting would be held on June 13, 2013.

Mr. T. Humphrey made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Gill seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Gill, Mr. T. Humphrey, Mr. S. Humphrey and Mr. Schmidt voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 P.M.

Submitted by: Kate Michaud      Approval Date: June 13, 2013